



MEDIA INFORMATION: For Immediate release

Transfigured Night

Hebrides Ensemble and Psappha – 25 years of new music

This November two of Europe's premier ensembles come together in their 25th anniversary seasons in a joint tour which celebrates 25 year of new music. Scotland's Hebrides Ensemble and the North of England's only stand-alone, professional contemporary classical music ensemble, Psappha, will perform a specially devised new programme *Transfigured Night* in Glasgow (8th November, St Andrews in the Square), Edinburgh (9th November, Queen's Hall), Salford (10th November, Peel Hall), Leeds (11th November, Howard Assembly Room) and Bangor, North Wales (12th November, Pontio Performing Arts Centre)

Speaking about the collaboration William Conway, artistic director and cellist, Hebrides Ensemble said: "For 25 years, Hebrides Ensemble and Psappha have shared a commitment and passion for creating and presenting a wide range of music at its best. We are delighted to celebrate our 25th anniversaries by joining forces in a unique event which includes a new work and a poignant farewell to our mutual friend Sir Peter Maxwell Davies."

Tim Williams, artistic director and percussionist, Psappha added: "Having long admired the work of the Hebrides Ensemble, our shared anniversary year and the support of our funders has enabled us to work together for the very first time and commission a new work from David Fennessy.

Transfigured Night also provides us with a great opportunity to celebrate the life of Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, with whom both ensembles enjoyed a deep artistic connection."

Transfigured Night begins with Peter Maxwell Davies's *The Last Island* performed with the backdrop of a haunting and evocative film of the Holms of Ire, the Orkney island setting which inspired the

composer. David Fennessy's *Panopticon* is a joint commission which receives its world premiere in Glasgow on 8th November. The second half of the programme features Schoenberg's *Transfigured Night* and, in marking the strong relationship both ensembles enjoyed with Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, the programme concludes with his *Farewell to Stromness* in a new arrangement by David Horne for six strings and cymbalom.

The artists are: Hebrides Ensemble's Zoë Beyers *violin*, Catherine Marwood *viola* and William Conway *cello*, and Psappha's Benedict Holland *violin*, Heather Wallington *viola*, Jennifer Langridge *cello* and Tim Williams *cymbalom*.

Hebrides Ensemble and Psappha are grateful for the support this project has received from PRS for Music Foundation, Creative Scotland, Arts Council of Ireland, Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the Arts Council of Wales, The Leche Trust, The Kimie Trust, McGlashan Charitable Trust, The Binks Trust and The RVW Trust. David Fennessy's new work, jointly commissioned by Hebrides Ensemble and Psappha, is supported by the Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation. These performances are supported by The Kimie Trust.



For further information click here: [Hebrides Ensemble](#) and [Psappha](#)

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Notes to editors:

▪ With programmes that are diverse, imaginative and inspiring, **Hebrides Ensemble** has established itself as one of the foremost chamber music collectives in the UK. Co-founded and led by its artistic director, the cellist and conductor William Conway, the Ensemble is renowned for its fresh and intelligent approach to programming, which places contemporary music at the heart of a diverse range of repertoire.

The Ensemble's flexibility is its strength, drawing its performers from a pool of the most outstanding musicians in the UK and beyond, ensuring the exceptional performance standards for which it has become renowned. This is an international ensemble with its roots in Scottish culture, a collective committed to supporting the next generation of performers and composers, particularly those with links to Scotland. In recent years it has commissioned and premiered new works from composers including Sally Beamish, Hafliði Halgrímsson, Sir Peter Maxwell-Davies, Sir James MacMillan, Alasdair Nicolson, Alasdair Spratt, William Sweeney and Martin Suckling.

In 2015 the Ensemble broke new ground by becoming the first professional ensemble to simultaneously connect musicians in Edinburgh to London and Italy in realtime. As Hebrides Ensemble celebrates its 25th birthday in 2016, it will launch the next phase of its pioneering digital strategy, which will allow audiences around the world to be part of every performance the Ensemble gives, using live streaming, Twitter feeds and cutting edge digital technology.

Among other accolades, Hebrides Ensemble's outstanding achievements were acknowledged by the Royal Philharmonic Society Awards in 2009, with a nomination in the Chamber Music Category.

www.hebridesensemble.com

▪ Formed in 1991 by Artistic Director Tim Williams, **Psappha** specialises in the performance of work by living composers and music of the 20th and 21st centuries. Psappha has an extensive and varied repertoire of hundreds of works and a reputation for technical assurance and interpretive flair.

Psappha is unique in its artistic offering as the North of England's only stand-alone, professional contemporary classical music ensemble. A National Portfolio Organisation for Arts Council England and a Talent Development Partner for PRS for Music Foundation, Psappha is based at St Michael's, the former Italian Chapel in Ancoats, an inner-city area of Manchester that was once the cradle of the Industrial Revolution.

Sir Peter Maxell Davies was Psappha's Patron for 20 years until his death in March 2016 and the ensemble's inspiration. Psappha gave a special 80th birthday concert for Max in Manchester in 2014 and have performed much of his chamber repertoire including the award-winning music-theatre work *Mr Emmet Takes a Walk* which he wrote for Psappha in 2000.

Psappha has appeared throughout the UK, featuring regularly at most of the country's major music festivals and has made highly successful tours to North and South America, Australia, and throughout Europe, also

appearing in the United States and Hong Kong through residencies at Princeton University and the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts.

Psappa launched its own CD label in 2004 and has released seven recordings, most recently a unique, limited edition vinyl recording supervised by Peter Maxwell Davies of his iconic Eight Songs for a Mad King.

Psappa supports composers at all stages of their careers, offering a range of opportunities to work with its expert musicians as well as a number of online film-based resources; Composition Lab supports GCSE and A-level music and Psappa Kids supports the music curriculum for 7 to 11 year-olds.

Psappa continually seeks to develop new audiences and break fresh ground. Through its websites Psappa provides more than 100 free-to-view films of live performances. The ensemble's YouTube Channel had over 31,000 views in the last 12 months making Psappa one of Europe's leading providers of new music online.

www.psappa.com